DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 178 638 UD 019 867

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TITLE Integrating Asian American Curriculum into the Classroom.
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the National Association for Asian American and Pacific Education Conference (San Francisco, California, April 25-27, 1979); Not available in paper copy due to reproduction quality of original document

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Asian Americans; *Asian Studies; Curriculum Design; *Curriculum Development; Discriminatory Attitudes (Social); Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnic Stereotypes; *Federal Programs; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Integrated Curriculum; Program Effectiveness; Public Schools; Student Attitudes; Textbook Bias
IDENTIFIERS Elementary Secondary Education Act Title IV; *Minnesota (St Paul)

ABSTRACT

Since materials are scarce, textbooks are incomplete, and teacher training is inadequate, teachers need ongoing assistance and training in integrating Asian American curriculum into their classrooms. A federally-funded project that is currently in its second year of operation in the St. Paul Public Schools is attempting to meet this need. The inservice training model and curriculum model utilized in the project are helping teachers eliminate many of the myths and stereotypes about Asian Americans, and the skills developed in project workshops are helping them to integrate Asian American studies into all areas of curriculum. In general, it can be said that results from the primary and high school levels indicate that the inservice training of teachers and providing them with the time to develop new curriculum materials has a positive effect on students' attitudes toward Asian Americans. (Author/EB)

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OCT 15 1979

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UD019867

This paper was presented at the April 1979 National Association of Asian American and Pacific Education Conference which was in part supported by funds from the National Institute of Education. However, the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the policy or position of either NIE or NAAAPE; and endorsement of the paper by either organization should not be inferred.

Integrating Asian American Curriculum Into the Classroom

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This paper explains "Integrating Asian American Curriculum into the Classroom," a three year, ESEA, Title IV-C project of the St. Paul Public Schools. The project is currently in its second year of operation.

Classroom curriculum often neglects the Asian American. There is a need to include Asian American history, heritage and culture in classroom curriculum so that students will be able to understand the status, needs and contributions of Asian Americans in our society.

According to James Banks, the school must help all students – minority and majority – to "break out of their ethnic encapsulations" and "to learn that there are other viable cultures in the United States, aspects of which can help to redeem and to revivify the dominant culture" (Banks, 1974, p. 165). This concept of cultural pluralism has received wide attention through the national media, numerous students and legislative activity (see State Board of Education, 1972; Guidelines Relating to Quality Intercultural and Non Sex-Biased Education; Policy Statement on Education Opportunity; Equal Education Opportunity Policies, Guidelines and Regulations for Minnesota Schools). However, in spite of remedial efforts by educators to teach our students about the contributions, histories and cultures of America's ethnic minority groups, few students can define an Asian American.

Who are the Asian Americans? If we rely on textbooks and curriculum materials currently available, the answer is elusive at best. The fact is that very little is taught about the Asian Americans in our educational institutions at all levels of instruction (Hata, 1973).

In contemporary America, we find a wide range of peoples whose ancestry can be traced to almost every significant ethnic and national grouping in those lands which the British once called "east of Suez." Their total number is small – not quite two million – in proportion to the total population of this country. They include Chinese, Japanese and Koreans from east Asia; Indian, Pakistani and other groups from south Asia; Vietnamese, Indonesians, Thais, Malaysians, Filipinos and others from southeast Asia; and a wide representation of Pacific peoples such as Samoans, Guamanians, and Native Hawaiians. According to the 1970 Census, the largest Asian American groups were the Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans and Filipino Americans (1970 Census). Some Asian Americans are relatively new to the United States. Others, such as Chinese and Japanese Americans, can trace their roots in this nation to the early nineteenth century. But whether they are old or new additions to the American scene, all Asian Americans as well as Asians in Asia have remained largely ignored by educators as well as textbook authors. When Asian Americans are omitted from the curriculum, the absence says that this group is not worthy, capable or important to the mainstream of American life. This omission is one of the most serious forms of stereotyping.

Students in elementary and secondary survey courses on social studies and United States history are largely ignorant of significant historical episodes involving Asian American events which are relevant to all Americans. This unawareness is reinforced by the omission of relevant aspects of the Asian American experience in all other curriculum areas, such as reading, mathematics, physical education, music, and language arts.

Few Americans realize that many Asian Americans – particularly the new arrivals and the aged without families to care for them – remain completely isolated and remote from both the affluent Asian American community and the larger society. Today, Chinatowns in this country are plagued with overcrowded living spaces, inadequate economic opportunities and an explosive level of frustration, hopelessness and despair (Hata, 1973). The stereotype of Asian Americans as a successful "model minority" who have "made it" in America is inaccurate and in need of careful re-evaluation.

There is much relevance for all Americans in the history, heritage and culture of the Asian American. The emphasis of our educational system on the Western and White Anglo-Saxon Protestant traditions has ignored and omitted this topic. Students need to learn about and understand the status, needs and contributions of Asian Americans in our society so that stereotyping is eliminated and replaced by sensitivity.

The lack of materials, incomplete texts and inadequate teacher training substantiates the need for teachers to have assistance and training in integrating Asian American curriculum into the classroom.

A number of standard United States history and social studies textbooks have been evaluated for their coverage of Asia and the Asian American experience. In 1969, Kane did a survey and was unable to report any significant changes in textbooks presentations since 1960 on citizens of Asian background. He, also, stated that:

> Not one world history makes an overt reference to the presence of people of Oriental origin in the United States. Of the thirty American history and American problems and civics texts analyzed, two histories and eight problems and civics texts violate the criterion of inclusion by totally failing to mention this minority group. Furthermore, of the eleven American history and five social problems texts that mention Japanese Americans, none meets the dual criteria of comprehensiveness and balance. As a matter of fact, only two textbooks make references to

either Chinese or Japanese Americans in contemporary society, and these are hardly to be considered complete. (Kane, 1969, p. 122)

In 1976, Interracial Books for Children did a study on Asian Americans in children's books. This study reported the following aspects: (Interracial Books for Children, 1976, pp. 3-5).

1. Misrepresentation of Asian American cultures with emphasis on exotic festivals, ancient superstitions and costumes, and the American Way of Life.
2. Promotion of the myth of Asian Americans as a "model minority."
3. Promotion of the notion that hard work, education and a low profile will overcome adversity and lead to success.
4. Measurement of success by the extent to which Asian Americans have assimilated white middle-class attitudes and values.

The major criticism of the study was the failure of books to depict Asian American culture as distinct from Asian culture or some "Oriental" stereotype of it and as distinct from the culture of white America.

A survey of the Ginn 360 Reading Series found one story, from a total of 388 stories, having an Asian American character. Likewise a survey of mathematics books found few pictures of Asian Americans, no mention of Asian American mathematicians and non-inclusion of Asian Americans in word problems. Music books contain music of Asian countries but not the music developed and sung by Asian Americans.

The overall result of these omissions is that Asian Americans, one of America's most diverse and interesting ethnic groups, are rarely studied in the elementary and high school grades. When discussed in textbooks, they are most often used to illustrate how a non-white ethnic group can succeed in the United States (Banks, 1975). Their contributions are generally absent. Furthermore, children's books which portray Asian Americans reinforce stereotypes which are, in turn, reinforced by media's negative presentations of Asian Americans.

Since 1970, there has been a slow, but steady increase, in the number of educational materials containing information on Asian Americans. These materials are usually produced and distributed on the West Coast. Few are available in bookstores in Minnesota. In fact, the only educational bookstore in Minnesota carrying the publication, **Roots: An Asian American Reader**, is found at St. Cloud State University. Since such materials are not readily available, teachers and, consequently, students have little if any, contact with them. For teachers, this means that the chances are slight that they will integrate Asian American information into their classroom curriculum. Hence, students are denied the opportunity to learn about this minority group.

In addition, pre-service, as well as in-service, experiences, have not provided the opportunity for teachers to learn how to incorporate Asian American history, heritage and culture into their everyday teaching. Inadequate teacher training on the Asian American has often led teachers to teach about Asia as the Asian American experience. It is vital that a clear distinction be made between Asians in Asia and Americans of Asian ancestry. Lacking knowledge, resources, materials, and skills, teachers will continue to omit teaching about Asian Americans in their classrooms.

In summary, there are two basic needs for this project. The need for students to learn about Asian Americans in our society is created by their absence in the curricula used in our schools. The other need centers on the lack of materials, inadequate texts and inadequate teacher training regarding Asian Americans. Our students do need to learn about Asian Americans. Since materials are scarce, textbooks are incomplete, and teacher training is in-

adequate, teachers need on-going assistance and training in integrating Asian American curriculum into their classrooms. In light of these unmet needs, it is hardly surprising that few of our students can define an Asian American. Absence of Asian Americans from curriculum educates our students to the myth that this group is not worthy, capable or important to the mainstream of American life. In-service education can be a principal catalyst for the integration of Asian American curriculum into all areas of curriculum taught in the classroom and the elimination of myths and stereotypes about Americans of Asian ancestry.

By the end of the first year of the project, the following activities were accomplished:

1. The establishment of an Asian American Resource Center, Room 226, North End Elementary School, 27 E. Geranium Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55117. The center serves as project headquarters where staff are located and in-servicing of teachers is done. A variety of cultural artifacts and Asian American materials and resources are also available at the Center.
2. Approximately twenty-five elementary teachers from both the public and non-public sectors have received five days of in-service training in Asian American history, heritage and culture and developed skills in how to integrate these aspects into their current curriculum in areas, such as language arts, science, music, and art.
3. Participating teachers implemented their integrated curriculum in their classrooms.
4. Students of participating teachers have been pre- and post-tested as to their knowledge of and attitudes toward Asian Americans in our society.
5. The project's advisory committee composed of parents, educators and community persons met on an on-going basis and has been instrumental in the open house at the Center scheduled in the spring.
6. Posters on Asian Americans as well as a slide-tape show on the project are available for dissemination.
7. A model for integrating Asian American curriculum into classroom curriculum has been piloted in the in-service workshops. A possibility exists for refinement during the second year and testing by using other ethnic minority groups, i.e. Black, Hispanic, Native American, as well as white ethnic groups, during the project's third year.
8. Students of participating teachers interacted with local Asian American resource persons and a nationally known Asian American resource person, i.e. poet, actress.
9. A curriculum resource guide for elementary educators has been developed and contains examples of integrated classroom curriculum as well as student work when appropriate. An annotated bibliography of available resources at the Asian American Resource Center is also available.

By the end of the second year of the project, in 1979, the following activities will be accomplished:

1. An increased number of Asian cultural artifacts and educational resources and materials will have been purchased by project staff and utilized by participating teachers.
2. Approximately thirty secondary teachers from both the public and non-public sectors will have received seven days of in-service training in Asian American history, heritage and culture and developed skills in how to integrate these aspects into their classroom curricula. Secondary teachers of curriculum areas other than social studies will be recruited to participate in this project.
3. Participating teachers will have implemented their integrated curriculum in their classroom.

4. Students of participating teachers will have been pre- and post-tested as to their knowledge of and attitudes toward Asian Americans in our society.
5. The project's advisory committee composed of parents, educators and community persons will have continued to meet on an on-going basis during the 1978-79 school year.
6. Oral history projects done by project staff and students will be available for dissemination.
7. A model for integrating Asian American curriculum into classroom curriculum will have been refined/revised as a result of the inservice workshops. A possibility exists during the third year for testing it by using other ethnic minority groups.
8. Students of participating teachers will have interacted with local Asian American resource persons as well as with a nationally known resource person.
9. A curriculum resource guide for secondary educators will have been developed and will contain examples of integrated classroom curriculum in a variety of subject areas. When appropriate, student work will be included. An updated annotated bibliography of available resources and materials at the Asian American Resource Center will also be a part of the guide.
10. First year participating teachers will have received on-going consultation services from the Asian American Curriculum Specialist.
11. An open house for the community and/or a mini-conference for educators on the project activities and products will have been conducted during the spring of 1979.

The in-service model utilized was an initial three day workshop with follow up sessions. The intent of the workshops is to provide training to teachers in Asian American history, heritage and culture. Teachers are to develop skills in how to integrate these aspects into their classroom curriculum areas such as language arts, science, music, and art. Local and national community resource persons were used in each workshop.

Teachers are required to develop at least six lessons which can be integrated into their regular classroom curriculum. Each lesson corresponds to each sub-section of the three areas listed below:

Stereotyping
A. Physical
B. Psychological

Similarities
A. Between Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans in regard to feelings.
B. Between Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans in regard to needs.

Differences
A. Between Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans in regard to contributions.
B. Between Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans in regard to traditions.

In general, each workshop was conducted as follows:

- Teachers were given overview of Asian American Project.
- Teachers selected curriculum area (music, art) in which they were going to integrate new material.

- Teachers developed objectives for new lessons (at least one in each of six areas).
- Teachers reviewed material in resource center and developed lesson plans to accomplish objective.
- Teachers integrate new material into their classrooms and evaluated the results.

All teachers participating in the workshop are required to develop one lesson for each of the six areas above so that there is uniformity and consistency in the development and integration of new material into the classroom setting. The uniformity and consistency in the development of new material is important because it is the hope of the project that a major project outcome will be identification of the most successful lessons in each of the three areas: Stereotyping, Similarities and Differences.

The intervention process then for this project is the integration of the newly developed Asian American materials into a teacher's regular classroom curriculum.

The curriculum model utilized for developing lesson plans is based on that of James Banks. Teachers select a key concept, i.e. stereotyping, similarities or differences, and develop a generalization about it relative to Asian Americans. Behavioral objectives for the lesson plan as well as teaching procedures are created and listed. Materials and resources needed for teaching the lesson are also found in each lesson plan. As a result of first year project activities, a curriculum guide has been published and lesson plans and activities will be demonstrated in the workshop.

Project evaluation focused on two major objectives during the first year:

A. Objective I — Students will increase their knowledge of Asian Americans in our society as measured by post-assessment of pre-determined, criterion-referenced student behavioral objectives developed for each lesson.

No specific instrument was utilized. However, the evaluator developed a data collection form for recording the observations of students behavior in accomplishment of the specific lesson objective. Teacher observations were predominantly used; however in some cases students were required to write or verbalize responses.

Each of the objectives was specifically developed to measure the extent to which the student had grasped the basic concepts of the lesson. Hence the objectives were indeed most reliable and sensitive in their measurement of the range, scope and nature of the specific behavior of the students.

Data was gathered to assess the extent to which students increased their knowledge of Asian Americans in our society.

In looking at the total data, 80% of the students' behavioral objectives were accomplished during this initial/pilot testing. This data would appear to indicate that the project did have an overall impact on student learning about Asian Americans.

In reviewing the data by grade level it appears that students in the elementary grades (K-6) which represented the vast majority did somewhat better than those secondary students. However, there is not enough evidence to indicate that this would always be the case.

In looking at the grade levels within the elementary data, it appears that primary grades (K-3) did appreciably better than the intermediate grades (4-6). However, it should be pointed out that grade 5 alone did much better than the kindergarten and almost as well as the 2nd and 3rd graders. It was grades 4 and 6 which did not do very well.

Generally speaking it could be said that the data appear to indicate that the in-servicing of teachers and providing them with time to develop new curriculum

materials does indeed have a bearing on students learning. Further, the evidence seems to indicate that the project is moving in the right direction and should continue in a similar manner for year two.

B. Objective — to significantly (.05) increase students' attitude toward Asian Americans in our society as measured by locally developed instruments.

Research indicated that an appropriate way to measure this objective would be to utilize the semantic differential technique developed by Osgood (1957). Semantic differential means the successive allocation of a concept to a point in the multidimensional semantic space by selection from among a set of given scaled semantic alternatives. In the case of this project the concepts used are the five Asian American groups: Japanese Americans, Filipino Americans, Korean Americans, Chinese Americans, and Vietnamese Americans. The scaled semantic alternative is sets of opposite words which have a definite meaning attributed to them.

The instrument used for the intermediate grades (4-6) was a true adaptation of Osgood's technique. Each concept utilized a series of bipolar verbal opposites defined by adjectives along a seven-step continuum scale. The sets of adjectives which were used for all five concepts (see above) are as follows:

(a)	Beautiful	Ugly
(b)	Strong	Weak
(c)	Honest	Dishonest
(d)	Clean	Dirty
(e)	Happy	Sad
(f)	Nice	Mean
(g)	Smart	Dumb

The entire instrument was set up according to Osgood's format.

In the case of the primary students, it was determined that they would not be able to complete such a sophisticated instrument. Therefore, the evaluation adopted the SD technique by emphasizing only four of the above sets of adjectives (a), (d), (f), and (g). These adjective sets were used on a three step continuum scale, and rather than have students check their preferences in boxes along each continuum sclae, happy, neutral and sad faces were pictured.

Osgood and other writers would have done considerable research on the validity and reliability of the SD technique. The following quote from a series of monographs edited by Snider and Osgood (1967) is an example:

> Much of our energy to date has been spent on evaluation of the instrument. Evaluation and refinement of the measuring technique seems to be more our job than application. We have amassed a considerable amount of data on reliability. The evidence shows that for indivdual subjects a shift of more than two scale units probably represents a significant change or difference in meaning, and a shift of more than 1.00 to 1.50 scale units in factor score (depending on the particular factor) is probably significant. For group data ("cultural meanings"), changes or differences in measured meaning as small as one-half of a scale unit are significant at the 5 per cent level. These levels of reliability should be satisfactory for most applications of the instrument. Regarding validity, there seems to be little question about the general face validity of the differential, because it obviously differentiates among and clusters concepts much the way most of us do spontaneously. There are at least two validity issues on which we need more evidence. One of these concerns the use of the method of triads (where the subject determines his own dimensions of judgment) as a way of validating the dimensions arrived

at through factor analysis: Does the semantic differential force the subject to use unnatural bases of judgment? The data we have show considerable correspondence, but more research of this type is needed. However, this method can probably only validate the major factors, i.e. the differential probably does force the subject to attend to some dimensions he would not use otherwise in addition to those used spontaneously.

Because the primary SD was an adaptation and modification of the Semantic Differential Technique, the evaluator selected a kindergarten and second grade class to determine a test retest reliability coefficient. Testing took place in a non-participating class on a two week time span. The Pearson product moment correlation (r) for the kindergarten class was .52, while the second grade class had a coefficient of .56. It should be noted that a correlation (r) of .5 or greater on a locally developed instrument, or modification of an instrument used to evaluate large groups is considered highly reliable.

Data was also gathered to assess the extent to which students increased their attitudes toward Asian Americans in our society.

In looking at the results it would seem to indicate that the project had some effect on changing students' attitudes toward Asian Americans in our society in the primary grades, especially kindergarten and Grade 2. However, when examining the results for the intermediate level, and specifically grades 4 and 5 as those are the grades for which we have data, there is no significant effect, although there is some movement in the expected or positive direction. It appears then that at least in the first year of operation, the project had a positive effect on the primary grades for the elementary level.

However, in contrast, the elementary level in the Open School did not show similar results. In fact, there was simply maintenance. However, the sample was small (N=13) which could indeed have a bearing on the situation.

On the other hand, secondary students in Grades 9-12 in the Open School showed substantial and significant positive increases in attitude toward Asian Americans. This is an interesting finding which will be needed to be explored further in year two when more secondary testing is done.

In general, then, it can be said that primary level and high school results appear to indicate that the in-servicing of teachers and providing them with time to develop new curriculum materials does have an effect on positively changing students' attitude toward Asian Americans. The evidence seems to indicate that the project is heading in the right direction and should continue in a similar manner for year two.

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